The role of unofficial sources, such as gossip on the street, and even anonymous complaints, suggests some of the rich lore surrounding "madness" in the period, and the contemporary fascination with the same. Perhaps related to this is an unofficial "relaxedness" if not laxity about allowing non-staff or former staff, even formerly abusive and discharge staff, to visit the premises, and apparently even to freely mingle and converse with patients. The patients themselves appear to have enjoyed some "freedoms," or rather to have earned them; at any rate they exercised them. It is ironic, but perhaps indicative of the complexity of the relationships between patients and staff, that the event which precipitated Alice's assault by one member of the staff, was her solicitude for another, the assaulter's sister.

Clark's public testimony to the press tends to differ from his testimony to the Police Magistrate and the Court. It is only before the latter two that Clark, as duty requires, offers a more specific diagnosis of Alice's mental disorder as "erotomania." To the Evening News, for example, he describes her illness more evasively as "melancholy madness," while offering some veiled hints at its sexual nature. These hints, such as Alice's being a "strong, well-built girl" with vaguely related "inclinations" which might lead her into "bad company," could refer to nothing more sinister than Alice's being a healthy young woman with a normal sexual appetite. That this condition might lead to trouble is more a criticism of the "bad company" or of general society than of Alice, and it is perhaps a moot question whose "inclinations" might not -- potentially -- lead them into trouble.

The real issue would appear not to be Alice's inclinations, but Alice's immaturity and simplicity in a wicked world. Yet from the notes of Justice Cameron, and from newspaper commentary subsequent to Clark's lengthier diagnosis, it is clear that the arbiters of public morality find plenty the matter with Alice herself, locate the source of the wickedness that was done to her in herself, and to an astonishing degree with things in herself that in any "normal" woman would be virtues. The "fact" of her madness places a kind of minus sign in front of all her human values.

General Observations: Authorities Confined